

REMARKS

The specification has been amended to address the informality noted by the Examiner, and to correct a reference numeral at page 9.

Claim 7 has been amended to incorporate the limitation of claim 8, and to improve compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112. In this regard, all claims now refer to a release apparatus, rather than a mechanism or arrangement.

The allowability of claims 9 and 10 is noted with appreciation. Newly submitted independent claim 11 represents a combination of claims 1 and 9; the dependency of claim 10 has been amended accordingly.

Claims 1, 7, and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Ota U.S. 4,372,178 in view of Shinto U.S. 4,319,497. To the extent that these references would be applied against claims as presently amended, such rejection is traversed for the reasons following.

Ota discloses an operating force transmitting apparatus including a pedal 13 having an arm 22 with a roller 21, and a cam link member 14 having a rolling cam which is loaded toward the roller by a tension spring 26 having one end fixed to the chassis and another end fixed to the member 14. As the pedal is pivoted, the roller 21 moves along the rolling cam to change the lever ratio, as depicted in Figure 5. Thus, as the effective lever length of the member 14 increases, the actuating force required at the pedal (referred to in this application as the operating force) decreases as a result of the increased ratio.

Clearly, as the pedal 13 pivots to disengage the clutch, the tension spring 26 will stretch and its spring force will increase according to the elementary equation $F=kx$. Thus, the spring 26 does not meet Applicants' limitations to an energy accumulator which stores energy when the clutch is engaged and provides a boosting force which reduces the actuating force when the clutch is being

disengaged. Any reduction in actuating force is achieved solely by the increased lever ratio; the sole purpose of spring 26 is to maintain contact between the roller 21 and the cam surface on the member 14. As such, the spring 26 can only increase the actuating force.

Shinto is cited solely for its disclosure of a master cylinder in conjunction with an actuating pedal, and adds nothing to defeat the patentability of claim 1.

The claims as amended and newly added being definite and clearly patentable over the art of record, withdrawal of the rejections and early allowance are solicited. If any objections remain, a call to the undersigned is requested.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application; however, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: August 3, 2004